

REMARKS

The Office Action dated May 3, 2006, has been received and reviewed by Applicant. Claims 1-19 are pending in the application. Claims 1-16 stand rejected. Claim 5 has been amended. Claims 17-19 are allowed. Reconsideration and allowance of the rejected claims are requested for the following reasons.

I. Claims 1-4, 7-9 and 11-14 stand rejected under **35 USC 103(a)** as unpatentable over Gelbart et al. (U.S. Patent 5,996,499) (hereinafter "Gelbart") in view of Okamura et al. (EP 0,985,528) (hereinafter "Okamura").

Gelbart discloses a method of preparing processless thermal printing media (on site or at the point of use), effectively eliminating the requirements of shelf life and robustness (See Abstract, ln. 1-11). Gelbart affirms the Applicant's submission that processless printing plates differ from other printing plates that require development. Specifically, Gelbart states, "However, recent technologies are "processless" meaning that they require no chemical development or other intermediate steps other than possibly wiping off ablated residue." (See Col. 1, Ln. 28-31). Therefore, Gelbart does not teach or suggest "exposing a processless plate in a computer-to-plate platesetter" and "forming a sharp bend along one edge of the plate inside said computer-to-plate platesetter without developing the plate" as recited in claims 1 and 4.

Okamura fails to remedy the above deficiencies. The Examiner states (at page 2 of the Office Action) that Okamura "teaches a bending blade (50) that bends a plate at a sharp angle along an edge of the plate" and that it "would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to modify the invention as taught by Gelbart et al. to include a plate with a sharp bend as taught by Okamura et al..." The Applicant respectfully disagrees. Okamura discloses a plate making system for printing plates that require development or chemical processing. Specifically, Okumura teaches a "plate-making system" wherein "a plate feeder 2, an exposure unit 3 and a *developer* 5" are linearly arranged, ...[and] wherein there are provided *on the downstream side of the developer*, "a borer 7 for making positioning notches 12a and positioning holes 12b in the plate material 12 for several pages of newspaper *as discharged from the developer* 5; a cutter 8 for cutting the plate material 12 for several pages of newspaper from the borer 7 into several plate materials 12, each the

size one page of newspaper; a first bender 9...; and a second bender 10...” (emphasis added) (See Abstract Paragraph (57), Ln. 6-27 and Figures 1, 2 and 8). The Okamura developer (5) “has within a case 32 a heater 33, developer 34, rinser 35, rubber coater 36 and dryer 37 as shown in Fig. 3.” (See Description Paragraph [0048], Ln. 1-3). “In this unit 5, the latent image formed in the exposure unit 3 is heated by heater 33 and fixed on the printing face on the plate” (where the high sensitive photopolymer layer (other than the fixed images) is removed with alkaline solution to form a printing face) (See Description Paragraph [0048], Ln 3-8) . “The plate material is then rinsed in the rinser 35 and put to protective treatment such as coating with rubber in the rubber coater 36”. (See Description Paragraph [0048], Ln. 8-10). In other words, Okumura teaches a method for bending plates that have undergone chemical development. Okumura teaches that the operation, including bending, are performed on printing plates *downstream* from developer 5. These aspects of the Okamura system clearly require that the imaged plates be processed in the developer 5 prior to being bent by a bender. Okamura also suggests that a plate must be flat for processing. Accordingly, Okamura does not teach or suggest “exposing a *processless* plate in a computer-to-plate platesetter” and “forming a sharp bend along one edge of the plate inside said computer-to-plate platesetter *without developing the plate.*” Okamura also does not teach the use of “*processless*” plates, since there would be no need to pass processless plates through a developer. As a result, Applicant’s invention would not be obvious over Gelbart, in view of Okamura.

Therefore, Gelbart and Okamura, either alone or in combination, do not teach or suggest a method that includes “*exposing a processless plate in a computer-to-plate platesetter*” and “*forming a sharp bend along one edge of the plate inside said computer-to-plate platesetter without developing the plate*” as recited in claims 1 and 4. Since claims 2 and 3 depend from claim 1 and claims 7-9 and 11-14 depend from claim 4, claims 2-3, 7-9 and 11-14 are submitted to be patentable over Gelbart and Okamura, either alone or in combination, for at least this reason.

II. Claims 5 and 6 stand rejected under **35 USC 103(a)** as unpatentable over Gelbart et al. (U.S. Patent 5,996,499) (hereinafter “Gelbart”) in view of Nakayama et al. (EP 0,950,925) (hereinafter “Nakayama”) and Miller et al. (US Patent 3,677,059) (hereinafter “Miller”). Claim 5 has been amended.

The Examiner contends (on page 4 of the Office Action) that claims 5 and 6 claim methods that include “punching the holes prior to exposing the holes and forming a sharp bend along the edge of the plate.” The Applicant respectfully disagrees. Gelbart discloses a method of preparing processless thermal printing media (on site or at the point of use), effectively eliminating the requirements of shelf life and robustness (See Abstract, Ln. 1-11). Gelbart affirms the Applicant’s submission that processless printing plates differ from other printing plates that require development. Specifically, Gelbart states, “However, recent technologies are “processless” meaning that they require no chemical development or other intermediate steps other than possibly wiping off ablated residue.” (See Col. 1, Ln. 28 to 31). Gelbart does not teach or suggest “an automatic plate bender positioned adjacent to an imaging system to receive imaged printing plates directly from said imaging system, the automatic plate bender configured to form a sharp bend along at least one edge of an imaged printing plate” as recited in claim 5.

Nakayama fails to remedy the above deficiencies. Nakayama describes a plate making apparatus for making plates of a highly flexible material such as plastic film or paper cut from a roll. Nakayama does not teach the use of “*processless*” plates. In particular, it states that “The plate material 22 is stripped off the exposure cylinder 25 at step 105 and is *developed* at step 106, then is discharged onto a plate discharge bed 28.”(See Description Paragraph [0043], Ln. 11-12 and Figure 3). On page 4 of the Office Action, the Examiner admits that “Nakayama et al. does not explicitly disclose a sharp bend along one edge of a plate.” Consequently, Nakayama does not teach or suggest “A computer-to-plate platesetter for exposing processless printing plates, the computer-to-plate platesetter comprising an automatic plate bender positioned adjacent to an imaging system to receive imaged printing plates directly from said imaging system, the automatic plate bender configured to form a sharp bend along at least one edge of an imaged processless printing plate” as recited in claim 5.

Miller fails to remedy the above deficiencies. The Examiner states that “Miller et al. teaches a plate bender that bends a plate at a sharp angle along an edge of the plate (Figures 5a-5c)”, that it “would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to modify the invention taught by Gelbart et al. to include a bending system adjacent to imaging system and a punching step before exposing as taught by Nakayama et al...” and that it “would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to modify the

invention taught by Gelbart et al. to include a plate with a sharp bend as taught by Miller et al..." The Applicant respectfully disagrees. Miller discloses a "semiautomatic machine for simultaneously bending the leading and trailing edges of a lithographic printing plate." (See Abstract, Ln. 1-2). The Miller machine is a separate plate bending machine for bending conventional lithographic printing plates after exposure and development. Miller does not teach or suggest, "exposing processless printing plates" or "imaged processless printing plate" in a computer-to-plate platesetter as recited in claim 5 since it states that "...a photosensitive plate of aluminum is exposed to a photographic image which causes portions of the photosensitive material to become solvent insoluble. Following exposure the plate is washed with a solvent to remove the soluble portion and to prepare the printing image" (See Col. 1, Ln. 1-10) and "...in view of the solvents used to prepare the printing plates and the resultant explosive vapors which are present, it is far safer to use a pneumatic drive than a similar electric motor drive." (See Col. 5, Ln. 74 to Col. 6, Ln. 2). Nakayama and Miller fail to contemplate *processless printing plates* since the technology taught by Nakayama and Miller require exposed plates to be processed in a developer after imaging. A plate must be flat for processing; consequently, it is not possible to form bends in a printing plate prior to processing. As a result, Applicant's invention is not obvious over Gelbart, in view of Nakayama or Gelbart, in view of Miller.

Accordingly, Gelbart, Nakayama and Miller, either alone or in combination, do not describe or suggest "A computer-to-plate platesetter for exposing *processless printing plates*, the computer-to-plate platesetter comprising an automatic plate bender positioned adjacent to an imaging system to receive imaged printing plates directly from said imaging system, the automatic plate bender configured to form a sharp bend along at least one edge of an imaged processless printing plate" as recited in claim 5. Claim 6 depends from claim 5 and is submitted to be patentable for at least this reason.

III. Claims 10 and 15 stand rejected under **35 USC 103(a)** as unpatentable over Gelbart et al. (U.S. Patent 5,996,499) (hereinafter "Gelbart") in view of Okamura et al. (EP 0,985,528) (hereinafter "Okamura") as applied to claims 9 and 4 respectively, above, and further in view of Nakayama et al. (EP 0,950,925) (hereinafter "Nakayama").

Claims 10 and 15 depend from claim 4 (either directly or indirectly). As discussed above, Gelbart and Okamura, either alone or in combination, fail to teach or suggest the claim 4 feature of “exposing a processless plate in a computer-to-plate platesetter” and “forming a sharp bend along one edge of the plate inside said computer-to-plate platesetter without developing the plate.” Also from above, the Applicant has shown that Nakayama fails to remedy the above deficiencies. As a result, Applicant’s invention is not obvious over Gelbart, in view of Nakayama.

Consequently, the Applicant submits that claims 10 and 15 patentably distinguish Gelbart, Okamura and Nakayama, either alone or in combination.

IV. Claims 16 stands rejected under **35 USC 103(a)** as unpatentable over Gelbart et al. (U.S. Patent 5,996,499) (hereinafter “Gelbart”) in view of Okamura et al. (EP 0,985,528) (hereinafter “Okamura”) and Nakayama et al. (EP 0,950,925) (hereinafter “Nakayama”) as applied to claim 15 above, and further in view of Iron et al. (US Patent 5,488,906) (hereinafter “Iron”).

Claim 16 depends from claim 15 (which directly depends from claim 4). As discussed above, Gelbart, Okamura and Nakayama, either alone or in combination, fail to teach or suggest the claim 4 feature of “exposing a processless plate in a computer-to-plate platesetter” and “forming a sharp bend along one edge of the plate inside said computer-to-plate platesetter without developing the plate.”

Iron fails to remedy the above deficiencies. The Examiner contends that “Iron et al. teaches an electrical circuit with a plate and registration pin (Column 4, Lines 54-67)” and that it “would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to modify the invention taught by Gelbart et al. to include an electrical circuit as taught by Iron et al...” The Applicant respectfully disagrees. Iron discloses an internal drum printing plate plotter that has a loading tray (24) for smoothly imparting an overall curve to a printing plate to facilitate loading the printing plate into a drum (21). *Iron expressly indicates that creasing of the plate is avoided* (See Col. 3, Ln. 41-42). *Iron fails to teach or suggest that exposure or bending takes place in a computer-to-plate platesetter.* Accordingly, Iron does not teach “exposing the first processless plate” in a computer-to-plate platesetter and forming “a sharp bend along one edge of a first processless plate inside a computer-to-plate platesetter without developing

the plate" as recited in claim 4. Therefore, Applicant's invention is not obvious over Gelbart, in view of Iron, since it is not obvious to modify the Iron internal drum plotter to provide a plate with a "sharp bend" as recited in claim 4. A plate having a sharp bend would prohibit the operation of guides (40) and/or rollers (100) used to load the plate into and out of the Iron et al. plotter (See Figures 3A, 3B, 9 and 10).

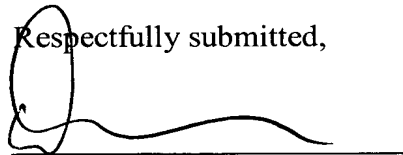
Consequently, the Applicant submits that claim 16 patentably distinguishes Gelbart, Okamura, Nakayama and Iron, either alone or in combination.

V. In view of the comments presented above, the Applicant submits that all of the pending claims of this application are in condition for allowance and respectfully requests reconsideration and allowance of this application.

Should the Examiner believe that issues remain outstanding, it is respectfully requested that the Examiner contact Applicants' undersigned attorney in an effort to resolve such issues and advance the case to issue.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any fees in connection with this communication to Eastman Kodak Company Deposit Account No. 05-0225. **A duplicate copy of this communication is enclosed.**

Respectfully submitted,



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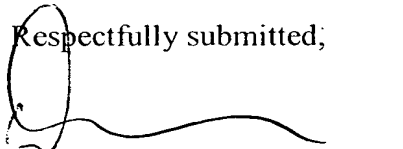
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